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HISTORICAL NOTES

ADDITIONS TO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

During the three months' period ending April 10, 1922, there were thirty-one additions to the membership roll of the State Historical Society. Eight of these enrolled as life members, as follows: Wheeler P. Bloodgood, Milwaukee; John Clark, Cleveland, O.; Gustave E. Eck, Lake Mills; Edward A. Fitzpatrick, Madison; Charles H. Leavitt, Manila, P. I.; William L. Pieplow, Milwaukee; Alfred C. Schmitt, Albany, Ore.; Augustus H. Vogel, Milwaukee.

Twenty-one persons became annual members of the Society: R. H. Adams, Minneapolis, Minn.; Robert J. Barnes, Oshkosh; Nile J. Behncke, Oshkosh; Chauncey E. Blake, Madison; Ralph N. Buckstaff, Oshkosh; Matthew J. Connell, Milwaukee; Loyal Durand, Milwaukee; William T. Harvey, Racine; Charles L. Hill, Rosendale; Earle S. Holman, Antigo; Jacob K. Jensen, Janesville; Clarence H. McClure, Warrensburg, Mo.; Emil A. Marthens, Milwaukee; Vine Miller, Sheboygan; Frederic C. Morehouse, Milwaukee; Caleb Olson, Racine; Edwin C. Ostermann, Milwaukee; Howell Parks, Muskogee, Okla.; Harry L. Russell, Madison; Ida Sherman, North Prairie; Lewis F. Silverthorn, Footville.

The North Division High School at Milwaukee became a Wisconsin school member, and the University of Oregon at Eugene an institutional member.

THE SMILEY PAPERS

Prof. Smiley Blanton of the University of Wisconsin has presented to the Society the papers of his uncle Gen. Thomas T. Smiley of Nashville. General Smiley was a lifelong resident of that city and acquainted with the historic and political characters of Tennessee. In early life he was a nationalist Whig; after the defeat of his party in 1852 he drifted into the Know-Nothing or American party. As a member of this secret organization he had in 1855 a political difference with Andrew Johnson, then campaigning for governor, which was about to lead to an "affair of honor." Upon Johnson's assurance, however, that he intended nothing personal in his allusion to the Know-Nothings, he and Smiley were reconciled and became political friends.

In the campaign of 1860 Smiley voted for Bell of the Constitutional Union party, and saw with much regret the South undertake secession. Nevertheless, he thought it his duty to support his section, volunteered for service to "repel invasion," and became major of the First Tennessee Volunteers (Confederate), which rendezvoused at Camp Cheatham. There he was aide-de-camp to General Foster, who was superseded by Zollicoffer. Smiley was recommended to both General Beauregard and

the Confederate secretary of war for a brigadiership. Whether actually appointed or not, he was thereafter known as General Smiley. After the first year of the war he saw no active military service; he did, however, hold an appointment from the Confederate government to negotiate with the federal authorities that occupied Nashville, especially with Johnson, military governor of Tennessee, on behalf of Confederate prisoners, persons whose estates were confiscated, and others suffering the hardships of war. General Smiley's influence was potent in ameliorating conditions in the occupied regions. He also acted as legal counsel for many in distress, and was trusted by both parties in the great struggle. After the war Smiley never reëntered politics, although frequently importuned to do so. He devoted himself to his legal practice and to the affairs of the Odd Fellows and Masons, in whose lodges he held high positions.

His papers are of many kinds: family and personal correspondence; legal and business documents; political and military letters. They extend in point of time from the close of the War of 1812 to about 1880, and are the only Tennessee papers we possess of a later date than the Draper Manuscripts. Among the interesting letters are one from William E. West, an American artist in Florence in 1820; an autograph of Edwin Booth; several letters of Andrew Johnson; and war letters of Generals Foster, Zollicoffer, Heiman, and other officers of lower rank. Pre-war papers dealing with the purchase, exchange, or hire of slaves are significant. Upon the whole, the Smiley papers, though not great in number, constitute a group of documents illustrative of the civilization of the lower Mississippi valley in the middle years of the last century.

LOUISE P. KELLOGG

THE STILSON DIARY

Among the recent additions to our manuscript collection is the diary of Eli Stilson II, who in 1845 made a reconnaissance of eastern Wisconsin to decide on its promise as a future home. Mr. Stilson was born in 1820 at West Windsor, Broome County, New York. He came west from Buffalo around the lakes to Milwaukee, where the steamboat landed him at half past two in the morning on a cold May day. The traveler thought that Milwaukee was not very attractive, "situated on uneven ground and divided by water. The streets are tolerable smooth but the sidewalks are miserable or not at all." It had some good buildings and did "a sight of business"; but in his estimation prices were too high of both rents and building lots. "A fair size three story building will rent for five hundred dollars or more—a single room for one hundred or more per year."

From Milwaukee Mr. Stilson went westward looking for land. He visited Milwaukee, Waukesha, Walworth, Jefferson, and Dodge counties, examining several sites for a farm but making no definite selection. He was a shrewd judge of good land, and classified what he saw as timber, white-oak openings, burr-oak openings, prairies, marshes, swamps, and lakes. Much of the land was held by non-residents and speculators.

He also noted water sources, springs, and wells. The artificial mounds left by primitive people interested him, and he made in his diary a drawing of one group near Summit, Waukesha County. The little homemade book of folded paper fastened with pack thread is an eloquent souvenir of pioneer days in Wisconsin, all the more that its writer later contributed a goodly share to the state's growth. In 1847 Mr. Stilson purchased a farm just north of Oshkosh. There he became a leader in the agricultural interests of the state, experimenting with sheep husbandry and the dairy industry. In 1860 he became a life member of the State Agricultural Society, and in 1871 vice-president for his district. In 1874 he was elected president of this important organization, and was twice reëlected, retiring in 1878. About this time Mr. Stilson made investments in Texas and Kansas. He continued, however, to make his residence at his farm home in the township of Oshkosh until his death August 20, 1883.

This early diary of one of the founders of our commonwealth was presented to the Society by his son, Edgar Stilson of Milwaukee.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Eugene W. Leach ("Marshall Mason Strong, Racine Pioneer") is a resident of Racine and a diligent student of her history. He is the author of several works pertaining to the history of his city and county.

Louise P. Kellogg ("The First Traders in Wisconsin") is senior research associate of the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

Gen. Charles King ("Memories of a Busy Life") is a resident of Milwaukee and one of the most widely known citizens of Wisconsin.

W. A. Titus of Fond du Lac ("The Lost Village of the Mascouten") continues in this number his interesting series of contributions to the history of early Wisconsin.

SOME WISCONSIN PUBLIC DOCUMENTS

Our associate magazine, the *Wisconsin Archeologist*, assumed in January a new dress and began a new series with volume one, number one on the title page. It is not too much to say that the twenty years' publication of the *Archeologist* has placed Wisconsin in the front rank of the states that are listing and preserving their prehistoric remains and are making scientific reports of the primitive men of North America. The editor and secretary, Charles E. Brown, has personally supervised the publication of every one of the eighty numbers of the *Archeologist* that has appeared in the past score of years. The Wisconsin Archeological Society, now numbering four hundred members in every section of the state, was founded in October, 1901 as a section of the Wisconsin Natural History Society. Eighteen months later, it came of age and assumed its own independence. All those who are interested in the vanishing race of our first Americans, and in keeping their relics and records for our children, owe a debt of gratitude to this Society, which with only a small state subsidy has persevered in its good work and has placed Wisconsin on the archeological map of the United States.

The University Extension department of debating and public discussion has issued a bulletin on *Wisconsin and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Deepwater Route to the Sea*, under the auspices of the Wisconsin Deep Water-ways Commission, of which Harry Sauthoff is executive secretary. His report on the significance of water-ways occupies the first place in this publication. Civilization has always followed water-ways; the rise of each of the great peoples of history has been upon the wings of sea-borne commerce. Water transportation is cheaper than land commerce, and now that the United States railways are almost bankrupt it is well to think of measures of relief. Price and production wait on transportation, and the only available remedy for the existing breakdown of the system and the possible dangers of another crisis is the proposed St. Lawrence water-way. It will affect every state between the Alleghenies and the Rockies, from Canada to Oklahoma. The estimated cost is not prohibitive; both the Panama and Erie canals cost more. Engineers are agreed as to its feasibility. Its building would release industrial workers to develop the agricultural lands of the Northwest. It would create a shorter haul to English, Scandinavian, and Mediterranean ports, as well as do away with the shifting of cargoes from cars to vessels.

A Joint High Commission of the United States and Canada met at New York City to discuss the problems of this water-way. Wisconsin was represented by F. E. Mitchell of Oshkosh. He reported the findings of this body with regard to ocean vessels. Three thousand two hundred and sixty-four are liners, 21,000 tramps. The former average above seven thousand tons, the latter below. Figures are here presented in the bulletin to show the average draft and the possibilities of lake navigation. By this water-way twelve states would be immediately affected, with a population of thirty-one million. It would give the farmers a needed outlet to foreign markets, and eliminate the cost of transfers at Buffalo for the all-water route, and transfers at Trenton for the all-land route to the port of New York. This project is not sectional but national in scope. Many Easterners favor it; for Wisconsin it would utilize a shore line surpassed in length only by Florida, Texas, and California. Terminals at Superior, Ashland, Green Bay, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha would lower rates and induce more complete cultivation of the land.

W. G. Bruce follows with statistics of Wisconsin's productive ability. The state now contributes \$125,000,000 of the United States exports. Her imports may be roughly estimated at \$60,000,000. By direct access to the sea Wisconsin's service to the nation will be doubled.

C. P. Norgord writes of Wisconsin's undeveloped agricultural possibilities. Her plow land may become eighty-two per cent greater than at present, with a potentiality of a marketable surplus of 102 per cent. Dean Russell estimates that in northern Wisconsin alone we have an area larger than Belgium awaiting transportation for development.

The Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey publishes as Bulletin No. 58, Educational Series No. 6, *The Geography and Eco-*

conomic Development of Southeastern Wisconsin, by Ray Hughes Whitbeck, professor of geography in the University. Professor Whitbeck's monograph is concerned with the physical geography and economic growth of five counties—Milwaukee, Waukesha, Racine, Kenosha, and Walworth, the earliest regions of our state to be settled after the lead-mine district. After describing the geology of the Great Lakes as related to this region, the author notes the mineral products of the district and the influence of Lake Michigan upon its progress. He then takes up each of the five counties in turn, noting briefly their pioneer era and the subsequent changes. The emphasis of this monograph is placed on industry and commerce, in which this region excels all other portions of the state. Agricultural history receives but brief treatment. It is probably the best account yet published of the growth of manufactures in the three large lake-board cities of southern Wisconsin. The bibliography is excellent; no references, however, are made to the material in this magazine. A few slight errors are noted. On page 78 is a typographical jungle. The author speaks, on page 77, as if the first railroad was proposed while Wisconsin was included in Michigan Territory. As this was in September, 1836, Wisconsin Territory was already organized. These mistakes, however, do not mar the excellence of the work as a source for Wisconsin history.

Recruiting for teaching service is assisted by a bulletin issued by the Platteville Normal School, entitled *Why Teach?* A call to teach is a call to arms; youth has enthusiasm, power, it must be directed. Do not drift, but consider in choosing a career what you can do best and most enjoy doing. The newer opportunities in teaching offer attractive vocations; there are manual art, rural, and agricultural schools for those who have such interests. Salaries are rapidly improving, and the pension system is effective, so teaching now carries an assurance of adequate living, and the possibilities of service that are creative opportunities. An interesting historical touch is given to this pamphlet by the excellently told reminiscences of one of Wisconsin's pioneer teachers.

ERRATUM

The second paragraph of footnote 16 of the article "Wisconsin's Saddest Tragedy," printed in the March, 1922, issue of this magazine, has been displaced from its proper position as the concluding part of footnote 15, on page 280. The paragraph in question was written by the author as a contribution to the discussion of the practice of carrying concealed weapons.